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REMARKS

This response is intended as a full and complete response to the Non-Final Office Action mailed February 10, 2005.

Claims 1-3, 6, 10-12, and 15 are currently pending. Claims 4, 5, 7-9, 13, 14, and 16-18 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 6, 10, and 15 are amended. Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of cancelled claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 9. Claim 10 is amended to include the subject matter of cancelled claims 13, 14, 16, 17, and 18. Claims 6 and 15 are amended to correct dependency to a cancelled claim.

It is to be understood that the Applicants, by amending the claims, do not acquiesce to the Examiner's characterizations of the art of record or to the Applicants' subject matter recited in the pending claims. Further, the Applicants are not acquiescing to the Examiner's statements as to the applicability of the prior art of record to the pending claims by filing the instant responsive amendments.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action objected to claims 9 and 18 as being dependent upon rejected base claims and indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 9 and all intervening claims, i.e., claims 4, 5, 7, and 8. Therefore, claim 1 is allowable.

Claim 10 is amended to include the subject matter of claim 18 and all intervening claims, i.e., claims 13, 14, 16, and 17. Therefore claim 10 is allowable.

Claims 2, 3, and 6 depend, directly or indirectly, from allowable claim 1 and, thus, inherit at least the allowable subject matter of claim 1, while adding additional elements. Therefore, claims 2, 3, and 6 are also allowable.

Claims 11, 12, and 15 depend, directly or indirectly, from allowable claim 10 and, thus, inherit at least the allowable subject matter of claim 10, while adding additional elements. Therefore, claims 11, 12, and 15 are also allowable.

The Office Action rejected claims 1 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,005,562 to Shiga et al. (hereinafter "Shiga").

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The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, because claims 1 and 10 are allowable for the reasons given above.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2-8 and 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shiga in view of Herz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,351,075, hereinafter "Herz").

The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, because claims 4, 5, 7-9, 13, 14, and 16-18 are cancelled and because claims 2, 3, 6, 11, 12, and 15 are allowable for the reasons given above.

CONCLUSION

The Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring adverse final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Eamon J. Wall at (732) 530-9404 so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

7/5/05

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